A

BRIEF and SERIOUS

WARNING

To ſuch as are concerned in

Commerce and Trading,

Who go under the Profeſſion of TRUTH, to keep within the Bounds thereof, in Righteouſneſs, Juſtice and Honeſty towards all Men.

Written by AMBROSE RIGGE,
in the Year 1678.

And now re-printed, together with the Advices of ſeveral Yearly-Meetings of like Tendency: By Order of the laſt Yearly-Meeting in LONDON.

LONDON:

Printed by MARY HINDE, at N° 2, in *George-Yard, Lombard-Street*, 1771.

BRITISH MUSEUM

MEETING for SUFFERINGS,
the 15th of the Eleventh Month 1771.

UNDER a ſorrowful Conſideration of the Reproach brought on Truth and our religious Profeſſion, by ſome late Inſtances of Perſons under our Name, who have ſhamefully deviated from our Principles as well as from common Honeſty and Juſtice amongſt Men, in failing of paying their juſt Debts, and thereby involving themſelves and others in Miſery and Ruin. The laſt Yearly-Meeting in London *did direct this Meeting to re-print a Treatiſe of our ancient Friend* AMBROSE RIGGE, *long ſince deceaſed, being a Warning to Friends againſt entering too deeply into Trading and the Spirit of this World, together with ſuch Yearly-Meeting Advices on that Head as might be thought proper.*

This Meeting therefore hath ſelected, and added to the ſaid Treatiſe, divers earneſt and pathetic Advices of ſeveral of our Yearly-Meetings, againſt a too eager Purſuit of the periſhing Things of this Life, omitting many others of like Import for Brevity's Sake: But ſuch as are here retained evidently ſhew, how early a Declenſion from the primitive Simplicity and Uprightneſs of our Anceſtors began to prevail among divers in Profeſſion with us;

and

and at the ſame Time the conſtant and unremitting Care and Concern that reſted on the Minds of our faithful Predeceſſors, and is ſtill continued amongſt us, to warn and adviſe all Friends againſt Pride, Ambition and Luxury, and Launching out into unwarrantable Trade to ſupport them.

A

BRIEF and SERIOUS

WARNING

To ſuch as are concerned in

COMMERCE, &c.

MANY Days and Months, yea, ſome Years, hath my Life been oppreſſed, and my Spirit grieved, to ſee and hear of the uneven Walking of many, who have a Name to live, and profeſs the Knowledge of God in Words; yea, and alſo of ſome who have taſted of the good Word of God, and have been made Partakers of the Power of the World to come, and have received the heavenly Gift and Grace of God, *which teacheth all*, who walk in it, *to deny all Ungodlineſs* and *Worldly Luſts, and to live ſoberly, honeſtly and righteouſly in this preſent World*; whoſe Faithfulneſs, with great Reaſon, hath been expected to God in Things of the higheſt Concern, and to have walked as Lights in the World, and in all Faithfulneſs both to God and Man, to have ſtood as living Monuments of the Mercies of the Lord, letting their Lights ſo ſhine before Men, that they might ſee their good Works, both in ſpiritual and temporal Concerns; and ſo might have honoured and glorified God in their Day and Generation, and have convinced, or confounded, Gain-ſayers, putting to ſilence the Ignorance of

fooliſh

fooliſh Men, whereby the worthy Name of the Lord, by which they have been called, might have been renowned through the Earth, and his precious Truth and Glory ſpread to the Ends of it; that many, through the beholding their good and exemplary Converſation in Chriſt, coupled with the holy Fear of God, might have deſired to lay hold of the Skirt of a *Chriſtian* indeed, *whoſe Praiſe is not of Men, but of God.*

Theſe are the Fruits which we have laboured and travelled for through many and great Tribulations, *that many might be turned to Righteouſneſs, and that the Knowledge of the Power and Glory of the Lord might cover the Earth, even as the Waters do the Sea.* This was, and is, our only End and Deſign, which, bleſſed be the Lord, many are Witneſſes of, and eſtabliſhed in, to our abundant Joy and Comfort: But there are ſome amongſt us who have not walked humbly with the Lord, as he hath required, nor kept in that low Eſtate, neither inwardly nor outwardly, which becometh ſuch who are travelling up to Zion, with their Faces thitherward, but have gone from the Rock, which is *firm* and *ſure*, into the great Sea of *Troubles* and *Uncertainty*, where ſome have been drowned, others hardly eſcaping, and many yet labouring for the Shore, with little Hopes of coming at it; who have not only brought themſelves in danger of ſuffering Shipwreck, but have drawn in others, and have indangered them alſo; which hath opened the Mouths of the Enemies of *Sion*'s Welfare, to blaſpheme his great and glorious Name, and hath eclipſed the Luſtre of the glorious Sun of Righteouſneſs both in City and in Country: This is a crying Evil, and ought not to go unreproved, and that with a

ſevere

a ſevere Countenance, for God is angry with it, and will aſſuredly puniſh it.

Many have got Credit upon the Account of Truth, becauſe at the Beginning it did, and doth ſtill lead all who were and are faithful to it, to Faithfulneſs and Truth even in the unrighteous *Mammon*, and to let their Yea be Yea, and their Nay be Nay, even between Man and Man in outward Things; ſo that many would have credited one that was called a *Quaker* with much, and many I believe, did meerly upon that Account, ſome whereof, I doubt, have juſt Cauſe to repent of it already: But if Truth and Righteouſneſs had been lived in by all who profeſs it, there had been no ſuch Occaſion given; for they who ſtill retain their Integrity to the Truth and Life of Righteouſneſs manifeſted, can live with a Cup of Water, and a Morſel of Bread in a Cottage, before they can hazard other Mens Eſtates to advance their own; ſuch are not forward to borrow, nor to complain for Want, for their Eye and Truſt is to the Lord their Preſerver and Upholder, and he hath continued the little Meal in the Barrel, and the Oil in the Cruſe hath not failed to ſuch, till God hath ſent further Help; this is certainly known to a Remnant at this Day, *who have coveted no Man's Silver, Gold or Apparel, but have and do labour with their Hands Night and Day, that the Goſpel may be without Charge.*

It is ſo far below the Nobility of *Chriſtianity*, that it is ſhort of common Civility and honeſt Society amongſt Men, to twiſt into Mens Eſtates, and borrow upon the Truth's Credit, gained by the juſt and upright Dealing of the Faithful, more than they certainly know their

own Eſtates are like to anſwer; and with what they borrow reach after great Things in the World, appearing to Men to be what in the Sight of God and Truth they are not, ſeeking to compaſs great Gain to themſelves, whereby to make themſelves or Children rich or great in the World: This I teſtify for the Lord God, is Deceit and Hypocriſy, and will be blaſted with the Breath of his Mouth, and we have ſeen it blaſted already.

And that Eſtate that is got either with the rending, or with the Hazard of rending another Man's, is neither honeſtly got, nor can be bleſſed in the Poſſeſſion; for he that borrows Money of another, if the Money lent be either the Lender's proper Eſtate, or Part of it, or Orphans Money that he is intruſted withal, or Widows, or ſome ſuch, who would not let it go but upon certain good Security, and to have the valuable Conſideration of it's Improvement; and the Borrower, though he hath little or no real or perſonal Eſtate of his own, but hath got ſome Credit, either as he is a Profeſſor of the TRUTH or otherwiſe, and hath, it may be, a little Houſe, and a ſmall Trade, it may be enough to a low and contented Mind; but then the Enemy gets in, and works in his Mind, and he begins to think of an higher Trade, and a finer Houſe, and to live more at Eaſe and Pleaſure in the World, and then contrives how he may borrow of this and the other, and when accompliſhed according to his Deſire, then he begins to undertake great Things, and gets into a fine Houſe, and gathers rich Furniture and Goods together, launching preſently into the ſtrong Torrent of a great Trade, and then makes a great Shew beyond what really he

he is, which is Diſhoneſty; and if he accompliſhes his intended Purpoſe, to raiſe himſelf in the World, it is with the Hazard, at leaſt, of other Men's Ruin, which is unjuſt: But if he falls ſhort of his Expectation, as commonly ſuch do, than he doth not only ruin others, but himſelf alſo, and brings a great Reproach upon the bleſſed TRUTH he profeſſeth, which is worſe than all; and this hath already been manifeſted in a great meaſure, and by ſad Experience witneſſed. But the honeſt upright Heart and Mind knows how to want, as well as how to abound, having learned Content in all States and Conditions; a ſmall Cottage and a little Trade is ſufficient to that Mind, and it never wants what is ſufficient: *For he that clothes the Lilies, and feeds the Ravens, cares for all who truſt in him,* as it is at this Day witneſſed, Praiſes to God on high: And that Man hath no Glory in, nor Mind out after, *ſuperfluous or needleſs rich Hangings, coſtly Furniture, fine Tables, great Treats, curious Beds, Veſſels of Silver, or Veſſels of Gold, the very Poſſeſſion of which creates Envy,* as ſaith the ancient *Chriſtian Clement Alexandrinus,* Pædag. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 3. Pag. 160, 161.

The Way to be rich and happy in this World, is firſt to learn Righteouſneſs; for ſuch were never forſaken in any Age, nor their Seed begging Bread. And charge all Parents of Children, that they keep their Children low and plain in Meat, Drink, Apparel, and every Thing elſe, and in due Subjection to all juſt and reaſonable Commands, and let them not appear above the real Eſtates of their Parents, nor get up in Pride and high Things, though their Parents have plentiful Eſtates, for that is of dangerous Conſequence to their future Happineſs: And let all

who profeſs the TRUTH, both Young and Old, Rich and Poor, ſee that they walk according to the Rule and Diſcipline of the Goſpel, in all Godly Converſation and Honeſty, that none may ſuffer Wrong by them in any Matter or Thing whatever; that as the Apoſtle exhorted, *they may owe nothing to any Man, but to love one another; for Love out of a pure Heart is the fulfilling of the Law*; which Law commands *to do juſtly to all Men.* And he that hath but little, let him live according to that little, and appear to be what in Truth he is; for above all God abhors the Hypocrite; and he that makes Haſte to be rich falls into *Snares, Temptations, and many fooliſh and hurtful Luſts*, which drown many in Perdition; *for the Love of Money is the Root of all Evil, which, while ſome have coveted after, they have erred from the Faith, and pierced themſelves through with many Sorrows.*

1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

For preventing this growing Evil for the Time to come, let ſuch by faithful Friends be exhorted, who either live without due Care, ſpending above what they are able to pay for, or run into great Trades, beyond what they can in Honeſty and Truth manage; and let them be tenderly admoniſhed of ſuch their Undertakings: This will not offend the lowly upright Mind; neither will the Honeſt-minded, who through a Temptation may be drawn into ſuch a Snare and Danger, take any Occaſion to ſtumble, becauſe his Deeds are brought to Light. And if after mature Deliberation, any are manifeſted to be run into any Danger of falling, or pulling others down with them, let them be faithfully dealt withal in Time, before Hope of Recovery be loſt, by honeſt faithful Friends, who are clear of ſuch Things themſelves, and be admoniſhed

niſhed to pay what they have borrowed faithfully, and in due Time, and be content with their own, and to labour with their own Hands in the Thing that is honeſt, that they may have wherewith to give to him that needeth, knowing that *it is more bleſſed to give than to receive.* And if they hear, and are thereby recovered, you will not count your Labour loſt; but if they be high, and refuſe Admonition, it is a manifeſt Sign all is not well: Let ſuch be admoniſhed again by more Friends, and warned of the Danger before them; and if they ſtill refuſe and reject Counſel and Admonition, then lay it before the Meeting, concerned about TRUTH's Affairs, to which they do belong, and if they refuſe to hear them, then let a Teſtimony go forth againſt ſuch their Proceedings and Undertakings, *as not being agreeable to the* TRUTH, *nor the Teſtimony of a good Conſcience, neither in the Sight of God nor Man:* This will be a Terror to evil Doers of this Kind, and a Praiſe, Encouragement and Refreſhment to them who do well, and nothing will be loſt that is worth ſaving by this Care; for he that doth Truth, whether in ſpiritual or temporal Matters, will willingly bring his Deeds to Light, that they may be manifeſted to all, that they are wrought in God. Acts xx. 35.

Theſe Things lay weightily upon me, and I may truly ſay, in the Sight of God, *I writ them in a great Croſs to my own Will,* for I delight not, nay, my Soul is bowed down at the Occaſion of writing ſuch Things; but there is no Remedy, the Name of the Lord has been, and is likely to be greatly diſhonoured, if Things of this Nature be not ſtopped, or prevented for Time to come: Therefore I beſeech you all,

who

who have the Weight and Senſe of theſe Things upon you, let ſome ſpeedy and effectual Courſe be taken to prevent what poſſibly we may, both in this and all other Things, that may any way cloud the Glory of that Sun which is riſen amongſt us. And make this publick, and ſend it Abroad to be read in true Fear and Reverence, and let all concerned be faithfully and plainly warned, without Reſpect of Perſons, by faithful Friends, who have a Concern for God's Glory, and his Churches Peace and Proſperity upon them: So will the Majeſty and Glory of God ſhine upon your Heads, and you ſhall be a good Savour of Life, both in them that are ſaved, and in them that are loſt.

Written by one who longs to ſee Righteouſneſs exalted, and all Deceit confounded,

Catton-place in *Surry* the 16th of the Eleventh Month 1678.

AMBROSE RIGGE.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

Yearly-Meeting-Epiſtles,

and Minutes.

1675.

ADVISED, that none Trade beyond their Abilities, nor ſtretch beyond their Compaſs; and that they uſe few Words in Dealing, and keep their Words in all Things, leſt they bring, through their Forwardneſs, Diſhonour to the precious Truth of God.

1688.

Dear Friends, as it hath pleaſed God to bring forth a Day of Liberty and Freedom to ſerve him, in which he hath ſtopt the Mouths of the Devourers, in a great meaſure, for his Name's Sake; O! therefore let every one have a Care ſo to uſe this Liberty, as the Name of God may be honoured by it; and not an Occaſion taken by any, becauſe of the preſent Freedom, to launch forth into Trading and Worldly Buſineſs beyond what they can manage honourably, and with Reputation, among the Sons of Men, and ſo that they may keep their Word with

with all Men, and that their Yea may prove Yea, and their Nay may be Nay indeed; for whatever is otherwiſe cometh of the evil One. And ſuch who make themſelves guilty by thus diſhonouring God, and the holy Profeſſion of his Name and Truth, ſuch are for Judgment by the Truth; and the Judgment of Truth ought to be ſet over them; that the Truth, and thoſe that abide and walk in it, may be clear of their Iniquities.

1692.

It is adviſed and earneſtly deſired, that the Payment of juſt Debts be not delayed by any profeſſing Truth beyond the Time promiſed and agreed upon; nor Occaſion given of Complaint to thoſe they deal with, by their Backwardneſs of Payment where no Time is limited; nor any to overcharge themſelves with too much Trading and Commerce, beyond their Capacities to diſcharge a good Conſcience towards all Men: And that all Friends concerned, be very careful not to contract extravagant Debts, to the endangering the wronging others and their Families, which ſome have done to the grieving the Hearts of the Upright; nor to break their Promiſes, Contracts, or Agreements, in their Buying and Selling, or in any other lawful Affairs, to the injuring themſelves and others, occaſioning Strife, Contention, and Reproach to Truth and Friends. And it is adviſed that all Friends that are entering into Trade, or that are in Trade, and have not Stocks ſufficient of their own to anſwer the Trade they aim at, be very cautious of running themſelves into Debt, without adviſing with ſome of their ancient and experienced Friends among whom they live; and more eſpecially ſuch Trading as hath its Dependance upon Sea-Adventures.

1724.

1724.

Whereas in this Time of general Eaſe and Liberty, too many under our Profeſſion have launched forth into the Things of this World, beyond their Subſtance and Capacities, to diſcharge a good Conſcience in the Performance of their Promiſes and Contracts, as well as their juſt Debts, to the great Scandal of our holy Profeſſion, and involving of themſelves, their Families and others, in great Sorrow and Inconveniences: It is therefore our earneſt Deſire, that all Friends every where be very careful to avoid all inordinate Purſuit after the Things of this World, by ſuch Ways and Means as depend too much upon the uncertain Probabilities of hazardous Enterprizes; but rather labour to content themſelves with ſuch a plain Way and Manner of living, as is moſt agreeable to the ſelf-denying Principle of Truth which we profeſs, and which is moſt conducive to that Tranquility of Mind that is requiſite to a religious Conduct through this troubleſome World.

1727.

Dear Friends, it hath long been the great Concern of this Meeting, that all Friends carefully walk in the Divine Light; that they may be preſerved from the two Extremes of Covetouſneſs on the one Hand, and Extravagancy on the other; the latter of which, has been the Occaſion of the Failings of ſome among us, in the Non-payment of their juſt Debts; by which great Reproach hath too often been brought upon our holy Profeſſion. Wherefore we earneſtly deſire all Friends to be very careful not to run into larger Trading and Buſineſs than their Capacities and Abilities can well anſwer; and that they frequently inſpect their Circum-

ſtances, and do not live at an Expence beyond them. And if, thro' adverſe Accidents, any ſhould fail in paying their juſt Debts, and ſhould, after his, or her Compoſition, with his, or her Creditors, be ſo far bleſſed and proſper'd in their Affairs, as to be capable of paying their Deficiences; it is the earneſt Deſire and Advice of this Meeting, that they do not omit the ſame, it being agreeable to the Command of the Goſpel, and common Juſtice among Men.

1731.

Let your Light ſo ſhine before Men, that they may ſee your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven. Let us walk wiſely towards thoſe that are without, as well as thoſe within. Let our Moderation, and Prudence, as well as Truth and Juſtice, appear unto all Men, and in all Things; in Trading and Commerce, in Speech and Communication, in Eating and Drinking, in Habit and Furniture; and, thro' all in a meek, lowly, quiet Spirit; that as we profeſs to be a ſpiritually-minded People, we may appear to be ſuch, as being bounded by the Croſs of Chriſt, ſhew forth the Power of that Divine Principle we make Profeſſion of, by a Converſation every Way agreeable thereunto.

1732.

We find it our Duty to remind our reſpective Members of the remarkable Uprightneſs and Honeſty of our Friends in the Beginning, in their Commerce and Converſe. How exact were they in performing their Words, and Promiſes, without evaſive Excuſes, and inſincere Dealings! How careful not to involve themſelves in Buſineſs which they underſtood not, nor had Stock of their own to manage! How circumſpect

not

not to contract greater Debts than they were able to pay in due Time! Which brought great Credit and Reputation to our religious Society. But with Sorrow we obſerve, that, contrary to their Example and the repeated Advices formerly given by this Meeting, particularly in the Years 1729 & 1731, againſt an inordinate Purſuit after Riches, too many have launched into Trades and Buſineſs above their Stocks and Capacities; by which unjuſtifiable Proceedings and high living, they have involved themſelves and Families in Trouble and Ruin, and brought conſiderable Loſs upon others, to the great Reproach of our holy Profeſſion.

1735.

Again, dear Friends, we eſteem it our Duty to renew our former Advices, that Friends every where take diligent Care to prevent, as much as poſſible, Perſons profeſſing with us defrauding their Creditors of their juſt Dues, to the great Scandal and Reproach of our holy Profeſſion, by timely admoniſhing and cautioning all thoſe of our Society, who, by Delays in Payment, and breaking their Words and Promiſes, give reaſonable Cauſe of Suſpicion that their Circumſtances are deſperate; adviſing all ſuch to inſpect their Accounts, and give up their Effects in Time, in order to make the beſt they can to their Creditors, which will moſt conduce to their own Peace, and the Credit and Reputation of our *Chriſtian* Society. But if any, through Ambition, or Deſire of Grandeur in the World, ſhall reduce themſelves to Inſolvency, after having been thus plainly cautioned, and dealt with according to the Nature of the Offence, and purſuant to the Advices of this Meeting in the Years 1728 & 1732, to which

we refer you, then the Society will juſtly be clear of Reproach ariſing from the Miſconduct of ſuch. A Care of this Nature we earneſtly recommend, not only to Monthly and Quarterly-Meetings, but alſo that Friends, in their private Capacity, watch over, adviſe, and caution one another, whenever they obſerve any real Occaſion for it.

1737.

Dear Friends, it is with much Sorrow and Grief of Heart, we have ſtill Occaſion to remind you of the Advices ſo lately delivered in our Yearly-Epiſtles, namely, to keep out of the extravagant Faſhions and Cuſtoms of the World, and not to launch farther into Trade and Buſineſs, than you are capable of managing and carrying on with Reputation and Credit among Men, and without Prejudice, Loſs or Detriment to any. We are fully perſwaded, that if Friends every where had a due Reſpect and Regard to this one Precept of Chriſt, *viz. Seek ye firſt the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs:* which is the indiſpenſible Duty of all his Followers to obſerve, we ſhould have little or no Occaſion for the Repetition of ſuch Advices: Let therefore, we earneſtly beſeech you, that Precept of our bleſſed Lord and Maſter and holy Head be duly conſidered and put in Practice; that by ordering our Converſations agreeable to our Profeſſion, we may ſhew forth the Praiſe of him who hath called us; ſo ſhall we witneſs the Promiſe to be fulfilled, *Them that honour me*, ſaith the Lord, *I will honour.*

1754.

We beſeech you, Brethren, ſtand upon your Guard againſt the Love of this World, and the Deceitfulneſs of Riches; the Nature of which is to choak the good Seed, and to render Men unfruitful.

unfruitful. An eagar Purſuit after the Grandeur of this World, is a certain Token of Earthly-mindedneſs; and thoſe who mind earthly Things, are repreſented by the Apoſtle *Paul*, as *Enemies of the Croſs of Chriſt*. The beloved Diſciple of our Lord alſo expreſly aſſures us, that *If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.* A Reſolution to be rich, hath deſtroyed many. *They that will be rich*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *fall into Temptation, and a Snare, and into many fooliſh and hurtful Luſts, which drown Men in Deſtruction and Perdition: For the Love of Money is the Root of all Evil; which while ſome have coveted after, they have erred from the Faith, and pierced themſelves through with many Sorrows.* This hath been verified in the ruinous Conſequences of an earthly ambitious Spirit, puſhing Men forward in the Purſuit of Greatneſs, upon hazardous Attempts, which have too often iſſued in the Fall and Ruin of themſelves and Families, the Reproach of the Society, and great Loſs to others. Some of whom probably, have placed the more Confidence in them for the Sake of their Profeſſion of Self-denial, which, had they really practiſed, would have prevented the fatal Effects of their covetous and ambitious Undertakings. Wherefore we intreat Friends, in their Monthly-Meetings every where, to be properly watchful one over another, and early to caution all againſt running beyond their Depth, and entangling themſelves in a greater Multiplicity of Trade and Buſineſs than they can extricate themſelves from with Honour and Reputation. And where any ſhall proceed in Oppoſition to ſuch Advice and Counſel of their Brethren, let them in due Time be dealt with according to former Advices of this Meeting.

1 John ii. 15.

1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

1759.

This Meeting being ſorrowfully affected with the Conſideration of a great Defection in ſome among us from the Practice of Juſtice and Morality, divers of whom, from Negligence, Inattention, or ill grounded Hopes, and others from Motives of Ambition, and an eager Purſuit after the World, have launched out of their Depth, and enter'd into various Schemes and Branches of Commerce, beyond their Abilities to manage; and ſome of them into ſcandalous Practices, to uphold a temporary Credit, greatly to the Reproach of our Society, and in open Contradiction to that Principle of univerſal Righteouſneſs we profeſs; which taught our Anceſtors ſuch Conduct, as to extort a Confeſſion from our Enemies, that, reſpecting many of them, they could not find any Occaſion, unleſs concerning the Law of their God.

And it is the Senſe and Judgment of this Meeting, that if any fall ſhort of paying their juſt Debts, and a Compoſition is made with their Creditors, to accept of a Part, inſtead of the Whole, notwithſtanding the Parties may look upon themſelves legally diſcharged of any Obligation to pay the Remainder, yet the Principle we profeſs enjoins full Satisfaction to be made, if ever the Debtors are of Ability. And in order that ſuch may the better retrieve their Circumſtances, we exhort them to ſubmit to a Manner of living in every Reſpect the moſt conducive to this Purpoſe, and correſpondent to the State they are reduced to: It being exceedingly diſhonourable for any to live in Oſtentation and Greatneſs at the Expence of others; which is certainly the Caſe, where any Part of the Debts, due by the Law of Equity and ſtrict Juſtice, remains

remains unpaid. And that Friends, in their Monthly-Meetings be cautious how they admit ſuch, whoſe Debts are unſatisfied, into full Unity, or receive their Collections, which cannot properly be deemed of their own.

1767.

Dear Friends, we find it neceſſary to remind you, that our worthy Anceſtors, having their Eye directed towards an enduring Inheritance, and their Affections eſtabliſhed upon Things above, ſought not after Greatneſs in this World, but paſſed the Time of their ſojourning here in Fear and in great Simplicity of Heart, as well as of outward Demeanour, endeavouring thereby to reach the Divine Witneſs in every Mind, and promote the Love of Truth and Righteouſneſs amongſt Mankind. In Minds thus bent upon ſeeking a more glorious Inheritance than Temporals can afford, the Love of this World had little Influence. They were ſhining Examples of Temperance, Juſtice and Truth. A Defection from this Simplicity of Heart, and Heavenly-mindedneſs, into the Love and Purſuit of this fading World, hath obviouſly prevailed with too many amongſt us, and produced the Fruits of Pride and Ambition: Theſe have brought in many Wants, which the Simplicity and Integrity of our Anceſtors preſerved them from. To ſatisfy theſe Wants, divers have been excited to enter into a larger Extenſion of Trade and Commerce, than they had Stock and Ability to conduct. Vain Ambition, and evil Emulation have led into higher Living, and greater Expences than their Income would admit. Reduced by theſe Means in their Circumſtances, yet unwilling to leſſen their Appearance in the World, they have made Uſe of indirect Methods

to procure a temporary Support, which have ended in Failures and Bankruptcies, unknown among us in the Days of our temperate, and lowly-minded Predeceſſors.

This lamentable Defection in ſome under our Name, hath occaſiond great Reproach, and grievous Suffering in the Properties of many, almoſt to the Ruin of Particulars, who placed more Confidence in thoſe on Account of the Self-denying Profeſſion they made to the World.

Theſe Cauſes of Affliction have been lately renewed, notwithſtanding the many repeated Advices, and Brotherly Exhortations, which have been heretofore affectionately communicated. We therefore earneſtly beſeech, and intreat, that a godly Care may more and more ſpread amongſt us, early and tenderly to watch over ſuch as may appear to be in Danger of Miſcarriage in their temporal Concerns; admoniſhing the High-minded of the Danger of a Fall, and uſing every Endeavour to prevent theſe ſcandalous, and pernicious Occaſions of Sorrow and Suffering: And where they break out, that Monthly-Meetings fail not to clear our holy Profeſſion of the Reproach caſt upon it, by publickly teſtifying againſt ſuch, from whoſe iniquitous Conduct the Offence comes.

1771.

Notwithſtanding the many weighty Cautions and wholſome Advices given forth againſt all injurious and diſreputable Conduct in Trade and Buſineſs, divers Inſtances of ſcandalous Failures have of late appeared amongſt ſome in Profeſſion with us; the Conſideration of which, hath brought a freſh Concern upon the Minds of

Friends,

Friends, to warn all againſt a moſt pernicious Practice, too much prevailing amongſt the Trading Part of Mankind, which hath often iſſued in the utter Ruin of thoſe concerned therein, *viz.* That of raiſing and circulating a fictitious Kind of Paper Credit, with Indorſements and Acceptances, to give it an Appearance of Value without an intrinſic Reality: A Practice highly unbecoming that Uprightneſs which ought to appear in every Member of our religious Society, and of which therefore we think it our incumbent Duty to declare our Diſapprobation, and Diſunity therewith, as abſolutely inconſiſtent with that Truth we make Profeſſion of. We are alſo engaged to caution every Individual, againſt imprudently entering into joint Securities with others. For by theſe Practices, many innocent Wives and Children have been inevitably and unexpectedly involved in ruinous and deplorable Circumſtances. We therefore earneſtly deſire Friends to keep ſtrictly on their Guard, that none, through any ſpecious Pretences of rendering Acts of Friendſhip to others with Safety to themſelves, may riſque their own Peace and Reputation, and the Security of their Families. In Order hereunto, we recommend this ſalutary Advice of the wiſe Man to their eſpecial Notice, and Regard. *Be not thou one of them that ſtrike Hands, or of them that are Sureties for Debts. If thou haſt nothing to pay, why ſhould he take away thy Bed from under thee?*

To the foregoing weighty Advices of the Yearly-Meeting we would add the following Caution. That Young People of little or no Capital of their own, beware of being anxious to get ſpeedily into Buſineſs for themſelves as

 Maſters;

Maſters; but rather content themſelves with the Condition of Servants, until by their Induſtry and Pains they have added ſomething to their Stock, and attained a ſufficient Degree of Knowledge and Experience to manage a Trade with Safety. By this means they will be accuſtomed to Frugality and Oeconomy, and a good Foundation will be laid for their conducting themſelves properly in a higher Station, if Providence ſhould ſee meet for them to fill it.

We are your Friends and Brethren,

Signed in and on Behalf of the Meeting *for* Sufferings,

By William Weſton,

Clerk *of the* Meeting.

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